



Indiana State Department of Agriculture
Governor Michael R. Pence
Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann, Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development
Gina Sheets, Indiana Agriculture Director

By Robert Ziegler, ISDA Director of Communications

Indiana Livestock operations of all sizes have a positive marketing tool available in the Certified Livestock Producers Program.

CLPP is the creation of and administered by the Indiana State Department of Agriculture. It has been designed to help participating livestock producers demonstrate their attentiveness to environmental quality and food safety in the face of increased scrutiny from consumers. Additionally, CLPP offers incentives to help the bottom line of livestock producers as they continue to provide the public with a safe and high quality product.

Indiana State Department of Agriculture Director Gina Sheets said the program is an important marketing tool for livestock producers who consistently show their willingness and ability to responsibly produce a safe and high quality product.

"There has never been greater awareness and interest in food quality and the importance of environmentally-sensitive practices on the farm," Sheets said. "CLPP gives livestock producers a tangible set of criteria to put on display before a discerning public. We know that farmers already have been doing the right things, but this program helps them show that to the consumer, as well as helping the producer offset some of the costs associated with practicing sound management in the livestock industry."

John Nagle, ISDA's Program Manager for Livestock Production, explained that producers enrolled in the program are responsible for meeting standards in five quality control areas: Environmental; Food Safety & Animal Well-Being; Emergency Planning; Biosecurity; and Being a Good Neighbor.

"All five program areas feature a third-party verification to ensure the integrity of the process," Nagle said. "We want to provide livestock producers with a credible and highly visible body of evidence that they are doing all the right things, and that has to be trustworthy for the consumer."

Nagle said statewide participation in the program has nearly tripled in the past three years since he has been with ISDA, a sign that its value is increasingly understood by both the producer and the consumer.

"Remember that all of these farmers are consumers too," he said. "We want safe food and we know by and large the livestock producers in this state are doing the right things. This just gives them a way to certify it independently, and show that to the buying customer."



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He expects the program to continue growing as more producers learn about the specifics of CLPP. As awareness of CLPP branding increases, livestock operations are becoming more eager to earn the designation as a marketing tool, even in terms of staying competitive with their fellow producers.

"I've seen where one of the largest family-owned operations in the state signed up and very shortly afterward another one did the same," Nagle said. "Clearly it is a good thing to have your business associated with in a competitive agribusiness landscape."

Along with this aid to marketing, other incentives to signing up involve corporate sponsorships, including the following:

- a discount on farm insurance policies from Indiana Farm Bureau
- discount on livestock equipment sales from Townsend's sales in Trafalgar
- a rebate on veterinarian trip charges from MWI Veterinary Supply
- Livestock equipment sale discounts from Cowco, Inc.
- discounts on emergency planning systems from Cherry Brother Designs
- Signs, certificates and optional media recognition from Indiana State Department of Agriculture.

"I think the program will just continue to grow as people learn about it," Nagle said. "It makes sense in terms of marketing, in terms of management and just financially. It's a very real way for ISDA to help the Indiana livestock farmer."

For more information on signing up for the CLPP, please visit <http://in.gov/isda/2395.htm>

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